

89200
6

THE RETIREMENT
OF
DR. HENRY WOODWARD.

[*Extracted from the* GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE, N.S., Decade IV, Vol. IX, pp. 1-2,
January, 1902.]

London : DULAU & Co., 37, Soho Square, W.



Yours truly
Henry Woodward.

July 1892



*Yours very truly,
Henry Woodward.*

[*Extracted from the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE*, Decade IV, Vol. IX,
No. 451, p. 1, January, 1902.]

THE RETIREMENT OF DR. HENRY WOODWARD.

(WITH A PORTRAIT, PLATE I.)

THE retirement of its Editor from official life, after a period of more than 43 years spent in the public service, is an event which should not be passed over in silence in this Magazine. And during his absence from England the opportunity may be taken to remind both its geological and zoological readers (no one at the present day, we presume, desires to be called a palæontologist) how deeply they are indebted to Dr. Woodward for conducting the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE for the long period it has been under his charge as Editor-in-chief. For those who have no regular official duties, which must take precedence of all else, the task of editing a monthly scientific journal, and supplying, when necessary, 'copy' from their own pens to fill gaps, is no light one; but it is one that can be described by no other word than irksome when it has to be performed while running in official harness. Nevertheless, since 1865 the Editor has conscientiously carried on this labour from month to month and from year to year without complaint—and to the satisfaction, we believe, of all his numerous readers. Punctually at the commencement of each month the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE makes its appearance; and we trust that it may long continue to do so under the same able editorship.

After its 'coming of age' in 1885, full reference was made in its pages to the Editor's connection with this journal.¹ And it will be unnecessary, therefore, on this occasion to repeat the eulogium then passed by Professor Bonney, except to add that since that date more than fifteen extra years of editorial work have been accomplished. If, as Dr. Bonney said, geologists and zoologists were at that time under a heavy load of debt to Dr. Woodward, their obligations must now be enormously increased.

As some indication of the amount of work, apart from editing this journal, that has been accomplished by Dr. Woodward, it may be mentioned that up to the year 1897 the list of his more important memoirs, papers, and addresses (a few written in conjunction with

¹ GEOL. MAG., 1886, p. 45.

Professor T. R. Jones) totalled 264; by this time they are probably little, if at all, short of 300.

But since on this occasion it is our intention to dwell on Dr. Woodward's connection with the British Museum, rather than with his general work and his editorship of this Magazine, we may pass on to our main subject.

Dr. Woodward first joined the staff of the Museum at Bloomsbury in 1858. The following year he was promoted, and he received a step in 1865 and again in 1867. In June, 1880, on the retirement of Mr. G. R. Waterhouse, he was appointed Keeper of the Department of Geology; and since that date, with his Assistants, he has achieved the task of rearranging the entire Geological Collection in the galleries of the Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, where, by the aid of popular and well-illustrated guidebooks, diagrams, and descriptive labels, the scientific student, and even the ordinary visitor, can readily derive instruction from the objects displayed in the cases. How much hard work and patience are required for a task of this nature, and what varied kinds of knowledge are necessary in order to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion (or, rather, to keep the Museum up to date), only those who have tried it can judge.

The first edition of the Guidebook to the Geological Department was issued under Dr. Woodward's superintendence in 1881; and since that date each new edition has been expanded and improved. The Guidebook is, of course, for the benefit of the general public, who have, as taxpayers, the first claim on the Museum. But the needs of scientific workers have by no means been neglected, and to Dr. Woodward is due the credit of having initiated in the Geological Department the issue of 'Catalogues' like those which previously proved so valuable to the students of recent zoology. Since 1881 a large number of these Catalogues have appeared under his supervision; how important these are to workers in the life-history of our globe, readers of the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE do not require to be informed.

It may be added that, according to the rules of the Civil Service, Dr. Woodward's time of service expired more than four years ago; but, upon the recommendation of the Trustees of the Museum, the Treasury twice sanctioned an extension of his period of service. We learn, moreover, that they have approved of his employment for a year longer on special work connected with the Museum. We also understand that at their meeting on November 23rd the Trustees passed a vote of thanks to Dr. Woodward on his retirement from the office of Keeper for the great services he had rendered during a period of nearly 44 years to the Geological Department.

Readers of this Magazine will, we feel sure, join in wishing Dr. Woodward health and happiness in the comparative rest he has so well earned; and they will be pleased also to have a copy of his portrait, which we have the privilege of inserting.

R. L.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b3060090x>

